

What is claimed is:

1. A collaborative computer telephony system, comprising:
a communication network;

5 a plurality of integrated computer telephony devices connected to the network and identified by unique IP addresses, at least two of said integrated computer telephony devices supporting collaboration application programs;

an indicator on at least one of said integrated computer telephony devices; and

10 a collaborate control program associated with each of said at least two integrated computer telephony devices for detecting commonly supported ones of said collaboration application programs and in response activating said indicator.

15 2. The system of claim 1, further comprising a user input device on said at least one of said integrated computer telephony devices for launching said commonly supported ones of said collaboration application programs in the event said indicator is activated.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein said network is a local area network.

20 4. The system of claim 1, wherein said network is the Internet.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein said collaboration application programs include video conferencing applications, fax applications, document sharing applications, and shared whiteboard applications.

25 6. The system of claim 1, wherein said integrated computer telephony devices each further comprise a telephone and a computer.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein said computer and telephone are each connected directly to the network.

30 8. The system of claim 6, wherein said computer is connected to said telephone which in turn is connected directly to the network.

9. The system of claim 6, wherein said telephone is connected to said computer which in turn is connected directly to the network.

10. The system of claim 6, wherein said indicator further comprises a light on said telephone and said user input device is a button on said telephone.

11. The system of claim 6, wherein said indicator and user input device further comprise a graphical user interface on said computer.

12. In a collaborative computer telephony system including a communication network, a plurality of telephones and associated computers connected to the network and identified by respective IP addresses, at least two of said computers supporting collaboration application programs, and an indicator on at least one of said telephones, a method for controlling said indicator comprising the steps of:

exchanging IP addresses of said at least two computers over said network;
issuing a request from a first one of said computers to a second one of said computers for a list of said collaboration application programs supported by said second one of said computers;

comparing said list with a further list of supported ones of said collaboration application programs within said first computer; and

activating said indicator at said first telephone in the event of at least one commonly supported ones of said collaboration application in said first and second ones of said computers.

13. Computer telephony apparatus for use in a collaborative computer telephony system comprising a communication network and a plurality of said terminals, said apparatus comprising:

5 indicator means for indicating that a collaborative session is set up with another computer telephony apparatus; and

collaborative control means for detecting the presence of collaborative control means in said another computer telephony apparatus and for activating said indicator means in response.

14. A computer program for controlling a computer to:
receive a request for a collaborative session with
15 at least one second computer,

issue a request to said at least one second computer over a network for a list of collaborative programs supported by said at least second computer;

20 compare said list with a list of supported collaboration programs within said computer; and

issuing an activation signal to activate an indicator in the event that at least one collaborative program is commonly supported by said computer and said at least one second computer.

25 15. A carrier medium carrying the computer program of claim 14.